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**Africa-RISING Ghana**

**Regional Research Team Meeting Report: Upper West Region**

**1.0 Introduction**

The first monthly regional research team meeting for the 2015 cropping season was held on the 30th of June 2015 at the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) Conference Hall Wa in the Upper west region. The meeting commenced with prayer from Mr. John Mwineyah.

The moderator for the meeting Mary Otiwaa Osei gave a brief address by welcoming all participants to the occasion. Her address was immediately followed by a self introduction of participants. Participants were made up of scientist form Savanna Agricultural Research institute, district MoFA directors, community facilitators and IITA staff attended the meeting.

The objectives of the research meeting were to;

* Discuss work packages for 2015
* Assess the progress of the Research for Development platforms in the district.
* challenges in project implementation
* preparation for USAID review team visit
* Scientific symposiums and field days.

**1.1** **Intensifying cereal- legume vegetable cropping.**

Mary together with Dr. saaka discussed with participants 2015 Research Theme on intensifying cereal- legume vegetable cropping. The discussion was centered on the four major activities namely

1. Number of households integrating legumes into their cropping systems.
2. Number of farmers adopting the cereal legume rotations and intercropping
3. Number of households integrating vegetables into their cropping system and lastly
4. Farmers adopting improved agronomic practices

**Actions to be Taken**

* District Directors should involved some retired agriculturist and National Service persons to fill gab in communities without AEAs and also train some community based volunteers in addition.
* National service persons that will be leaving the district after their service in July should not be engaged.
* MoFA directors and field staff should submit their reports timely to facilitate the release of funds for their fuel to enable them work efficiently.
* IITA has assigned one field staff to each district to smooth the progress of work ( Hamid seidu assigned to Wa West and Fusieni Abdulia for nadowli).
* All community facilitators have been trained and should assist their colleagues in field laying and planting.
* Fence the technology park area at Natorduori to avoid destruction by animal.
* Agric extension agents for the respective communities were to document the number of farmers adopting good agronomic practices (role planting and timely weed control)

**2.0 Socio-economics**

Mr. Stephen Frimpong who represented Dr. Bekele gave a presentation on the work done so far by the socio-economic team. He said technologies were designed to increase the productivity of several crops: cowpea, maize, soybean, groundnut, vegetables (eggplant, okra, pepper, roselle, and tomato) and that there was two years data for 43 treatments but only a one year data for the remaining technologies

The treatments were categorized

* Pest management (PM): 14
* Soil Fertility Management (SFM): 41
* Cropping System Diversification (CSD): 47

To enable IITA complete the socioeconomic studies for 2015 the following actions were to be taken

**Actions to be Taken**

* Facilitators from the six intervention communities Goli, Goriyiri, Gylli, Zanko, Passe and Guo were to register farmers outside the beneficiary farmers and submit the list to IITA Office in wa by 7th July 2014
* Enumerators must be properly trained by Frimpong and the socioeconomics team question after question in the instrument for all of the enumerators to get the same understanding of a question.
* Questionnaire should not be too bulky (citing IFPRI’s GARBES questionnaire of about 46 pages as an example).
* pretesting of questionnaire must be well done by both enumerators and their supervisors

2.1 **Brief on MoFA activities.**

Both Wa West and Nadowli MoFA directors talk about the number of baby and scaling up trials conducted last year and their preparation to continue those activities, The tables 1 and 2 below summarizes the achievements of both district.

Table 1 ON-FARMS VARIETAL TRIALS AND ACHIEVEMENTS for Nadowli and Wa West – 2014

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of trial** | **Wa West** | | **Nadowli** | |
| Target | Achieved | Target | Achieved |
| 1. Soya Soil treatment | 20 | 18 | 10 | 5 |
| 2. Cowpea – varietal | 40 | 27 | 50 | 41 |
| 3. Maize – varietal | 60 | 41 | 60 | 53 |
| **Sub-total (101)** | **140** | **86** | **130** | **99** |

Table 2 ON FARM UP SCALING DEMONSTRATION AND ACHIEVEMENTS

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. | **Wa West** | | **Nadowli** | |
|  | Target | Achieved | Target | Achieved |
| Maize – Cowpea rotation system | 35 | 33 | 34 | 33 |
| 2. Maize – Soya rotation | 15 | 15 | 21 | 21 |
| 3. Maize –Cowpea Strip Cropping | 35 | 31 | 27 | 24 |
| Maize – Soya strip cropping | 15 | 15 | 18 | 17 |
| **Sub-Total** | **100** | **94** | **100** | **95** |

Mary pointed out during the discussion that although the trials were well established as mentioned the data collected and submitted were not properly done as per the protocol.

She emphasized that both AEAs and directors have been again train on this year's protocol and it is expect that data to be collected as designed in each protocol.

She also mentioned that IITA has given each farmer is given a protocol together with his or her inputs supplied to facilitate the proper implementation of each activity by the AEA.

**3.1 R4D Wa West**

**T**he Wa West District Director of Agriculture who also doubles as the chair for the R4D Platform gave a brief account of the activities been carried out as follows;

* Visited three out of the five intervention communities in the district to sensitize them on the role of the platform.
* Received their share of protocols, seeds and fertilizers for the baby and up-scaling trials.
* Used the ‘AMSEC’ tractors to assist communities like zanko, guo and siriyiri in land preparation.
* Organized one executive meeting.

Madam Mary said much work still needs to be done with regard to the district platform since up till now they are yet to open an account and that most of their activities were on paper without implementation.

**Actions to be taken**

Frimpong suggested that new executives should be selected to manage the Wa West R4D Platform since the current team, headed by the MoFA Director seems to be overburdened and therefore have limited time for R4D work.

**3.2 R4D Nadowli**

The Nadowli/Kaleo District Director of Agriculture also gave an account on behalf of his district platform. He said that after the inauguration in September last year the platform have successfully open a bank account at Sunzele rural bank in Nadowli, have held their first quarter meeting with funds from the Africa RISING project and have also inaugurated the various community level platforms and encourage them to also open their individual accounts. He also noted that the farmer groups were also trained on quality grain handling. it was worth noted that most women took up executive positions at the community level R4D.

**Action to be taken**

* The district R4D should assist the community level R4D to develop their constitution to facilitate the opening of their bank accounts.

**2.3 General discussions and comments**

* Dr. Saaka suggested that the project should train some community based volunteers as well as extend the service period of national service personnel to at least the end of the year by paying their allowance until the end of the year since there service period is almost due.
* Mr. John Baana the community facilitator for Nator-Duori suggested for change to their technology site since it was too close the community and therefore opened to destruction by animals. He was advised by Mary that we could not change the site since the project needs two year data from each site for publication, it was agreed that IITA will fence the area before planting of the mother trials to curtail that problem.
* Mr. Gaetin Kunyangnaa of the Community Aid for Rural Development (CARD) suggested that the farmers concern should be looked at seriously and possible fence the area to avoid destruction by animal.
* Mr Isaac Yendau the Vice Chair Wa West Research for Development (R4D) platform made a contribution to the effect that the AEA for passe was not always available to demarcate farmers fields with lack of fuel as an excuse.

**3.0 Summary of major outcomes**

The progress of work done as far as the Africa RISING project is concerned in the various intervention communities and the impending visit of the USAID review team were discussed with lead farmers and key partner institutions.

**Closing remarks**

Mary thanked all participants for attending the Research Team meeting and contributing in the discussions and reminded them of the date for next month meeting (30th July 2015). she also mentioned that although the other project partners were invited but they could not turn up due to unknown reasons.

Apendix



Figure 1: Stephen Frimpong leading the discussion on partnerships and socioeconomics of intensification (RT1)



Figure 2: Participants brainstorming on how to improve the AR activities for in 2015



**PROGRAMME**

REGIONAL MONTHLY RESEARCH MEETING

30th JUNE, 2015

VENUE: MOFA Conference Hall Wa

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Time** | **Activity** | **Responsibility** |
|  | Rapporteurs: | Fusieni Abdulia and Siedu Hamid |
| 08:30 am – 09:00 am | Arrival and registration | Mahama Ismail |
| 09:00 am – 09:10 am | Open prayer and introduction of participants | All |
| 09:10 am – 09:20 am | Welcome address/ meeting objectives | Asamoah Larbi / Mary |
| 09:20 am – 09:40 am | Brief on crop and soil activities and discussion | Dr. Saaka and Mary Asante |
| 09:40 am – 10:00 am | Group photo and coffee break | All |
| 10:00 am – 10:20 am | Brief on socio-economic studies | Bekele Kotu/ Frimpong Stephen |
| 10:20 am – 10:40 am | Brief and discussion on influence of AR activities on partner organizations | Antika and CARD representatives |
| 10:40 pm – 11:10 am | Brief on small ruminant studies and discussion |  |
| 11:10 am – 11:30 am | Brief on Wa west MoFA activities and discussion | Dominic Maalu |
| 11:30 am – 11:50 am | Brief on Nadowli MoFA activities and discussion | David Waawula |
| 11:50 am – 12:10 pm | Brief on Wa West R4D activities and discussion | Isaac D Endau |
| 12:10 pm – 12:30 pm | Brief on Nadowli R4D activities and discussion | John Mwininye |
| 12: 30- 1:30 pm | Discussion and plan for key AR activities (USAID review team visit; field days; scientific symposium) | Mary |
| 1:30 pm | Closing remarks | Asamoah Larbi/Mary |





